

Redwood Forest Foundation, Inc.
Working Community Forests

July 13, 2006

Ms. Tam M. Dodue / Chair
State Water Resources Control Board
1001 I Street
Sacramento, CA 95814



SRF Loan Number C-06-6090-110/Big River and Salmon Creek Conservation Project

Dear Ms. Dodue:

I am writing on behalf of the Redwood Forest Foundation Inc. (RFFI). RFFI consists of a diverse group of people on the North Coast who have come together to purchase forestland and management it in a way that protects important water quality as well as other conservation values while sustaining the economies of local communities.

I understand that on July 19th the State Water Board will consider a State Revolving Fund loan to The Conservation Fund to assist with the purchase of approximately 16,400 acres of forestland in the Big River and Salmon Creek Watersheds. The Conservation Fund plan to repay the State Revolving Fund loan through logging receipts while protecting important ecosystems fits the RFFI model, so we enthusiastically support this loan.

North Coast Redwood forestland is slowly being converted from productive forests providing jobs, clean water, clean air and healthy ecosystems to something quite different including subdivision and vineyards with the negative economic things that go with conversion such as erosion, loss of jobs, habitat degradation etc.

The Big River / Salmon Creek acquisition is the first step in an innovative new way to slow this conversion of forestland. What makes it unique is that it brings the community into the equation from an input and access standpoint which RFFI considers paramount to diminishing controversy over timber harvest on the North Coast. This acquisition also utilizes low cost financing which combined with conservation dollars means that we can leverage these limited conservation dollars into protecting broad landscapes.

RFFI represents a broad cross section of people on the North Coast working together to create a new paradigm in regards to forest ownership and management. We urge the State Water Board to support our efforts towards sustainable eco-systems, economies and communities by approving this State Revolving Fund loan to The Conservation Fund.

Sincerely;

Art Harwood / President

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